

# Investment suffers in 'the kill zone'

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OAKLAND — Marvin Budderman is frustrated, angry and facing a dilemma.

The war on drugs, Budderman says, is being lost and is costing him.

The 66-year-old Oakland man believes his sizable investment in rental property along streets some call "the kill zone" is in further jeopardy.

He said conventional crime-fighting or "neighborhood watch" efforts have not had much impact on the area, which has a high crime rate.

"It's hard to rent out places when you tell people the apartment is down here on MacArthur," said Budderman who owns 14 buildings in East Oakland from 73rd and 100th avenues between MacArthur Boulevard and East 14th Street. "People say, 'What else do you have?'"

"I just patch over the bullet holes."

## Investment stays in place

Budderman said he needs help from police and the city.

Two years ago, he suffered a concussion when a gunman hit him with a weapon, Budderman said.

"I can't leave my \$750,000 investment," Budderman said. "Drugs have ruined this area. Twenty-five years ago, it was a nice place to live."

But now thugs rule some streets. This year, near one of his apartment buildings in the 7900 block of MacArthur Boulevard, there have been two murders, a robbery and an arrest for possession of narcotics, police records show. Last year was a bit calmer: two felony assaults with a deadly weapon and two misdemeanor assaults with a deadly weapon.

Last month, a block away, several gunmen chased a fleeing drug dealer, firing 15 shots but missing their target.

Capt. Richard Ehle said police are handling about 8,000 to 9,000 drug cases yearly citywide, a steady rate for the past 5 years.

## Dealers make big money

"We have been focusing on crimes of violence in the last 18 months," Ehle said. "Some of these (drug dealers) are making \$200 to \$500 a day. They see their friends get killed, but that doesn't stop them."

"MacArthur is active, but we have places that are busier," Ehle said. "People are going to have to control their

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children and work with the police. We are taking on these (high crime) areas, one by one. Some neighborhoods are coming forward."

Police estimate Oakland has 3,000 drug "hot spots." Some are especially dangerous but residents either look the other way or have learned to live with the sound of gunfire and squealing car tires.

The Oakland Police Department Beat Health Unit now includes foot

patrols along MacArthur from 73rd to 82nd avenues. Residents there are encouraged to call a special drug hot line or 911. The community group Safe Streets Now! helps residents monitor drug houses and then take legal action to evict dealers.

Oakland real estate agents have started a program to show landlords and property owners how to spot and evict drug-dealing tenants.

But Budderman says none of these programs have helped him.